



# Angler's Notebook

by Jerry Bush



photo-Jerry Bush

Northern pike are voracious predators that become even more ravenous as winter approaches. They are known to prowl the edges of deep water as temperatures start to cool and nights grow longer. September and October are particularly productive months, as the fish seek to ingest all the nourishment they can find in preparation of winter's cold water.

Because northern pike are particularly hungry prior to the arrival of winter, the fish are likely to attack larger spoons and crankbaits more often than they did during the summer months. Just remember to slow the baits down as the water temperatures cool. By all means, work the famous figure eight pattern before pulling lures out of the water and recasting. Many pike, and muskellunge for that matter, attack the bait right at the boat during this prolonged retrieval technique.

It's no secret that Pennsylvania provides some of the most beautiful autumn scenery in America. What may be surprising is the fact that most fish in the Keystone State

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simultaneously become very active? Wise sportsmen and women combine sightseeing outings with angling adventures.

During the summer months, the peak times to catch muskellunge and pike are the first and last hours of daylight. However, the fish show a different preference during the autumn months. When air temperatures drop to a point at which frost sometimes covers the ground, the fish respond to the warmest rays of sunshine. Therefore, noon becomes the most common time of day for strikes to occur.

## Fishin' from the Kitchen

### Chipotle-dusted Pike Fillets with Pinto Bean Stew

by Wayne Phillips

Give pike a whole new dimension of flavor by dusting them with chipotle powder.

Ingredients for four servings:

- 4 pike fillets, about 6 ounces each
- ¼ cup flour
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- ¼ cup powdered chipotle peppers
- ½ cup peanut oil

#### Procedure

Mix powdered chipotle peppers, flour, salt and black pepper together in a shallow bowl. Coat the pike fillets with the mixture. Heat peanut oil over medium heat. Fry pike fillets until just cooked through. Drain pike fillets on paper toweling before serving.

#### Serve

Serve over a bed of pinto beans that have been flavored with onions, garlic and bacon. Crusty rolls or cornbread go well with the spicy pike.

#### Hints

Chipotle peppers are jalapeño peppers that are dried and smoked, giving them a wonderful smoky heat. If you like hot spicy foods, add more powdered chipotles or use less if your family likes just a bit of heat.



photo-Wayne Phillips

#### Pinto Bean Stew

After soaking beans overnight in cold water, drain them. Fill a pot with fresh water and simmer beans slowly until done. This usually takes about 1½ hours. About 30 minutes before the beans are done cooking, sauté diced onion, minced garlic and diced bacon until the vegetables are softened and the bacon is crisp. Add these ingredients to the beans and simmer until the beans are soft. By adding the onions, garlic and bacon near the end of the cooking process, they maintain their individual characteristics and flavor the beans beautifully.